



I CLAIM:

- 1 1. A method for treating glucomannan in a fine konjac powder or flour with an
2 average particle size of less than about 160 microns comprising:
 - 3 (a) contacting the fine konjac powder or flour with an organic alcohol solution of at
4 least about 30 percent by volume alcohol; and
 - 5 (b) adding to that mixture a sodium or calcium salt solution such that a gel
6 membrane forms at the surface of the particles by reaction with the glucomannan.
- 1 2. The method of claim 1 wherein the mixture of step (b) is filtered to remove liquid
2 from the particles to form a first filtered solids.
- 1 3. The method of claim 2 wherein the first filtered solids are contacted with an
2 concentrated organic alcohol solution to consolidate the gel membrane.
- 1 4. The method of claim 3 wherein the mixture is filtered to remove liquid from the
2 particles to form a second filtered solids.
- 1 5. The method of claim 4 wherein the second filtered solids are dried to form a gel
2 coated powder having substantially all its particles covered in separate gel coats.
- 1 6. The method of claim 1 wherein the organic alcohol is an ethanol solution less than
2 or equal to about 60 percent by volume of ethanol.
- 1 7. The method of claim 6 wherein the mixture of step (a) is stirred to wet
2 substantially all the fine konjac powder or flour and is maintained thereafter in an
3 undisturbed state for at least three minutes.

1 8. The method of claim 6 wherein the mixture of step (a) is stirred to wet
2 substantially all the konjac flour and is maintained thereafter in an undisturbed state for
3 less than or equal to ten minutes.

1 9. The method of claim 6 wherein the mixture of step (b) is stirred and is maintained
2 thereafter in an undisturbed state for at least ten minutes.

1 10. The method of claim 6 wherein the mixture of step (b) is stirred and is maintained
2 thereafter in an undisturbed state for less than or equal to 30 minutes.

1 11. The method of claim 5 wherein the gel coated powder contacts a liquid
2 comprising substantial amounts of liquid water.

12. The method of claim 11 wherein the liquid water is prevented from being
absorbed by the glucomannan by the gel coats for more than about 2 minutes.

1 13. The method of claim 12 wherein the liquid water is a beverage or part of a
2 beverage and is ingested by a human user with the gel coat powder before substantial
3 swelling of the glucomannan occurs.

1 14. The method of claim 12 wherein the liquid water is part of a beverage with a
2 temperature above about 100 degrees F and is ingested by a human user with the gel
3 coat powder before substantial swelling of the glucomannan occurs.

1 15. The method of claim 5 wherein the gel coated powder contacts a liquid
2 comprising small amounts of liquid water.

1 16. The method of claim 15 wherein the liquid water is part of a meat product and is
2 ingested by a human user with the gel coat powder before substantial swelling of the
3 glucomannan occurs.

1 17. The method of claim 15 wherein the liquid water is part of a dairy product and is
2 ingested by a human user with the gel coat powder before substantial swelling of the
3 glucomannan occurs.

1 18. The method of claim 15 wherein the liquid water is part of a flour product and is
2 ingested by a human user with the gel coat powder before substantial swelling of the
3 glucomannan occurs.

1 19. The method of claim 11 wherein the gel coated powder is other high viscosity
2 soluble fiber powder, such as guar gum, alginic gum.

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